



STATE OF MARYLAND

Community Health Resources Commission

45 Calvert Street, Room 336 • Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Larry Hogan, Governor – Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor
Elizabeth Chung, Chair – Mark Luckner, Executive Director

May 7, 2020

Maryland Community Health Resources Commission FY 2020 COVID-19 Virus Emergency Relief RFP Frequently Asked Questions

1) What is the COVID-19 Emergency Relief Request for Proposal?

In response to the COVID-19 virus pandemic the Community Health Resources Commission (CHRC) is utilizing its existing authority to provide emergency relief grant funding for eligible community health resources to support the emergency response efforts of our safety net providers and to help minimize the disproportionate impact of reduced service capacity and access on Maryland's vulnerable populations and communities.

2) How much emergency grant funding is available?

This RFP is supported with \$1 million in federal funding made available under the CARES Act, which has been forwarded to the CHRC by the Maryland Department of Health.

3) Is there a maximum amount for requested emergency grant funds?

Yes, the Commission will limit grant awards to \$50,000 for applicants selected to receive emergency funds.

4) Is there a minimum amount for requests of emergency grant funds?

No, the Commission did not approve a minimum amount for requested emergency grant funds.

5) Are there restrictions on the use of federal funds awarded under this RFP?

The U.S. Treasury has provided guidance on the use of these funds. [Click here](#) to review the U.S. Treasury guidance.

6) Will additional emergency grant funds be made available by the Commission?

It is unknown at this time if additional emergency grant funds will be made available to address expenses related the COVID-19 pandemic response. The Commission recognizes that as the pandemic response unfolds and we learn new information about the emergent needs of our safety net providers and the communities we serve, funding availability and priorities will evolve to meet those needs.

7) Is my organization eligible to apply for grants from the COVID-19 Emergency Relief Request for Proposal if my organization has already received COVID-19 funding from the CARES Act or any other federal, state or private sources?

As stated in the RFP, CHRC staff will work to ensure that the limited amount of grant funds available in this emergency relief RFP supports safety net providers and does not replicate COVID-19 virus pandemic funding available from federal, state or private sources (e.g., CARES Act). Applicants will need to provide information on how this funding request does not replicate COVID funding from these other sources.

8) Who is eligible to apply for emergency grant funds?

The Commission will consider proposals from any community health resource eligible under the Commission's regulations found at Title 10, Subtitle 45 of the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR), specifically COMAR 10.45.01.02.B(7) and 10.45.05.01-.05. *See also* Md. Code Ann., Health-General Art. § 19-2101(d).

9) What documents are required to certify my eligibility as a community health resource?

Documents required to certify eligibility are: (1) CHRC Letter of Request – Application Form, (2) Budget Form, (3) supporting financial documentation as detailed in the RFP, (4) Grant Obligations & Assurances form, and, if applicable, (5) sliding scale fee schedule or statement that services are free of charge.

10) What is the time period that the emergency grant funds can cover?

Grant funds awarded under this RFP may cover eligible expenses incurred between March 1, 2020 through December 30, 2020.

11) Are current CHRC grantees eligible to apply for emergency grant funds?

Yes, current CHRC grantees are eligible to apply for emergency grant funds in this RFP. However, current CHRC grantees are encouraged to take advantage of the grant modification process to reallocate a portion of current unspent grant awards for expenses related to COVID-19 pandemic response.

12) Can I apply if my organization received funding under the CARES Act or another federal source?

Yes, an organization that has received funding under the CARES Act may apply for emergency relief funding provided by this RFP. As indicated in the RFP, CHRC staff will ensure that the funding requested is not duplicative.

13) Are hospitals eligible to apply?

Yes, as stated in the current RFP, hospitals are eligible to apply to the extent that they are a community health resource (most hospitals are considered a community health resource). However, as stated in the RFP, CHRC staff will be working to ensure that use of funds is not duplicative. During the RFP process CHRC staff will be coordinating with MDH and HSCRC staff to evaluate grant applications.

14) Are behavioral health providers eligible to apply for this funding opportunity?

Yes, behavioral health providers may apply but must meet community health resource eligibility requirements. CHRC staff will be ensuring that the funding requested will not be duplicative of other sources. During the review process, CHRC staff will be coordinating with MDH and BHA staff.

15) Are Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) eligible to apply for emergency relief funding in this RFP?

Yes, as FQHCs are eligible community health resources. However, Commission staff will be ensuring that the funding requested will not be duplicative of other sources of funds (e.g., BPHC/HRSA distributions authorized under the CARES Act).

16) If an organization applies for emergency funds or is awarded emergency funds is the organization ineligible to apply for grant funding from the Commission in the future?

No, applicants for emergency grant funds or applicants awarded emergency grant funds will not make the organization ineligible to apply for future grants from the Commission. However, applicants that receive emergency funds under the current RFP are prohibited from receiving grant awards under **emergency** RFPs issued by the Commission over the next three years.

17) What information is required in the Letter of Request for emergency grant funding?

A response to all questions in the Letter of Request is expected. At minimum, the Letter of Request must include all organization information requested, evidence that the organization is a “community health resource,” information regarding the program or services target group and the geographic area in which the program operates, an explanation of how the emergency funds will be utilized to stabilize the organization/program, a description of efforts to obtain other emergency funds and/or other emergency funds received.

18) When is the deadline to submit a Letter of Request and supporting documentation?

The deadline to submit a Letter of Request is 12:00pm (noon) on Thursday, May 14, 2020. The Letter of Request and other required documents as outlined in the RFP must be submitted via email to mdh.chrcfy2020covid@maryland.gov prior to the submission of the signed hardcopy originals.

19) Can an organization submit a Letter of Request after the 12:00pm (noon) Thursday, May 14, 2020 deadline?

No, the Commission cannot consider any Letter of Request received after the 12:00pm (noon) Thursday, May 14, 2020 deadline.

20) Are signed original documents mandatory?

Yes, signed original documents as specified in the RFP are due to the Commission on Tuesday, May 18, 2020. This requirement cannot be amended or waived, and the Commission cannot provide any other accommodation to circumvent this requirement.

21) Are original signed documents due to the Commission on Tuesday, May 18, 2020 mandatory?

Yes, signed original documents as required by the RFP must be received by the Tuesday, May 18, 2020, deadline.

22) Is the requirement to submit a financial audit and other financial documents mandatory?

The Commission uses the financial information of the applicants to evaluate the long-term financial solvency of its potential grantees and to ensure that limited public grant funding is invested in financially sustainable entities.

23) What documentation is required to determine financial stability of an applicant?

The CHRC will accept the following documents as proof of financial stability (three years):

- Tax Returns / Form 990s
- Annual Report (audited/unaudited)
- Financial statements, including but not limited to: Income Statement, Balance Sheet or Profit & Loss Statements

Applicants may provide information regarding other funding and disbursements they receive; however, absent the formal documentation requested above, the application may be flagged as "high risk."

24) If an organization has not existed for three or more years or does not have three years of financial documentation how does the Commission assess the financial stability of that applicant?

Applicants that have not existed for at least three years or cannot provide three years of financial documentation may provide information regarding resources they have received, and expenditures incurred; however, the application may be flagged as a "high risk."

25) Does current or prior performance as a grantee affect the awarding of emergency funds?

Applicants should be aware that past/current performance as a grantee with the Commission will be taken into consideration when applications are reviewed.

26) What can the emergency grant funds be used for?

Examples of permissible uses of redirected grant funds for COVID-19 virus response include:

- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Increased infection control measures and services for environmental cleaning and disinfection.
- Costs to implement and maintain social distancing guidelines (e.g., physical barriers).
- Costs for establishing and operating public telemedicine technology.
- Re-purposing facilities to meet increased service demands without the need for capital improvement (e.g., temporary public medical facilities to increase COVID-19 treatment capacity).
- Alternate communication technologies to reach clients/patients (e.g., mobile apps).
- Telework expenses incurred due to stay at home orders (e.g., equipment, software, web conferencing).

For further guidance on permissible uses of these grant funds, please consult RFP and US Treasury document posted on the CHRC website:

<https://health.maryland.gov/mchrc/Pages/home.aspx>

27) What are examples of what the emergency grant funds cannot be used for?

Based on federal requirements, this funding cannot be used to offset salary costs, lost revenue incurred due to reductions in the number of patients/clients served or reductions in service utilization.

As previously stated, applications for funding under this RFP cannot be sought for COVID-19 related response expenses that have been or will be reimbursed through other federal or state programs.

28) Can general operating losses be covered in this emergency funding opportunity?

This RFP is supported with federal funding made available by MDH. It is our understanding that federal guidelines do not permit this use. See attached U.S. Treasury document for permissible uses of funding.

29) When will the Commission make its decisions regarding approval of emergency relief grants?

The Commission will meet in late June 2020 to discuss and approve grant awards under this RFP.

30) Can expenses be recouped that have already incurred? If yes, what supporting documentation is required?

Yes, eligible expenses incurred on or after March 1, 2020 through the time of the submission of the invoice are eligible to be covered by the grant award. Supporting documentation includes, but it is not limited to, receipts, invoices clearly marked paid, and other evidence of payment for eligible expenses.

31) What is the significance of the March 1, 2020, date regarding requested use of emergency grant funds?

The CARES Act provides that payments from the Crisis Fund may only be used to cover costs that were incurred during the period that begins on March 1, 2020 and ends on December 30, 2020. Please see the attached guidelines from the US Treasury for further information.

32) What is the significance of December 30, 2020 regarding requested use of emergency grant funds?

Please see the response above regarding effective dates for eligible expenses under federal guidelines. Refer to the US Treasury guidelines attached for more information regarding eligible expenses that can be incurred and covered by the grant award as stipulated by the requirements in the CARES Act.

33) Will additional funding be available for pandemic related expenses and loss of income?

It is not known at this time if additional funding will be made available for any purpose. The Commission will keep its constituents informed of the availability of any additional funding for pandemic related expenses.